

A CRITICAL STUDY ON SARDAR K M PANIKKAR'S PATRIOTIC VISION AND NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS

DR KRISHNAKUMAR A, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF HISTORY, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, N S S COLLEGE , PANDLAM, KERALA, INDIA (Affiliated to University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala)

ABSTRACT

Sardar K M Panikkar was a statesman of international repute, diplomat, and writer, his resourcefulness manifested itself in many fields such as education, journalism, and politics. He had at the zenith of a very full and dynamic public life and his works and achievements are so far not complete he could successfully and with distinction fill the roles of different administrative professions. He has rendered valuable service to our country and he could find times to write 56 major works. In this article, an attempt has been made to write his vision of Nationalism from different perspectives in the Indian context. He has filled many roles in our public life, then again his countless love has always been for history and literature and experience with deep knowledge of human nature. He has an excessive ability for historical writing and he has lit up our past.

KEY WORDS : Nationalism, Motherland, Rig-Veda, humanity, western education, Mid-Victorian sort, denationalize, Vedantists, Political salvation, Anglicizing

Sardar K M Panikkar opines that the nationalist movement stands as the representation of progressing life of the people of India and Indian Nationalism is unique among the great political movements of the world. Those who express it have recognized their right to be professed. No one says that the movement is immaculate; no one says that all its supporters have always been intelligent. But the leaders of the Indian peoples can and do claim that the movement they represent, is a genuine effort, not an artificial one. The Indian National Movement entitles to be the voice of India's progressing life, Like every other national movement, it presupposes a definite unity, an integrating life cycle, a collective hope, a common Motherland.¹

His vision of the ancient past from Rig-Veda the oldest textbook in the ancient world and the record of humanity specify that the sacred mother country transfers into a living divinity. Even such an ancient book as the Rig-Veda, one of the oldest literary records of humanity, reveals conscious and fervent attempts made by the Risis, those profoundly wise organizers of Hindu polity and culture, to visualize the unity of their mother country, truly, to transform the mother earth into a living divinity and preserve her in the loving heart of the worshippers. The history of India is not, as it is often thought to be, a mere story of the rise and fall of kings, a Police Gazette of political crime, a mere chronicle of war and intrigue. India has to face the glory or disaster, it is always the one land that achievements or sustains, and unfluctuating years of disorder obtain the greatness of misfortune from a unity which then suffers contradiction.²

His discourses that the national movement in India is purely characteristically a religious movement so it has a close connection with great religious movements that happened during the freedom struggle. This unity of India has not been simply the idea of a few intellectuals at this time and in attendance. It has been felt and prayed for by every single devout Hindu, expressed in an immortal form in literature and art, and realized practically in the social and religious institutions of Hinduism. It would be untruthful to say that the National Movement in India is distinctively a religious movement, yet no one can study the Movement without remarking on its intimate and wide connection with those great religious revivals which have been the salient characteristic of Hindu life during the last five-and-twenty years. English observers have noticed the connection, though not all of them have assumed it.³

The western education conveyed by the British people contributes to a political awakening of Indian people from their long sleep. The great leaders were represented by an inordinate intellectual age group in India. A little while ago the very able pen of Sir Valentine Chirol defined to us India of

the middle seventies, India that he first knew. In those days, says Sir Valentine, the educated young Hindu was appropriate to be at slightest in matters intellectual Plus royaliste que le Roy. He had altogether denied or had learned secretly to despise, the beliefs and customs of his forefathers. He respected and admired Englishmen and their life. Education of a Western kind had largely denationalized as, perhaps, it was intended to do those whom it had touched. When India's political mind awoke from its long sleep, it awoke into English Radicalism of the Mid-Victorian sort. That was the creed nay, it was the faith of the pioneer generations, of the generations represented by Dadabhai Naoroji, Mahadev Govind Ranade, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale. One of the prime aims of British education was to denationalize the national movement in India.⁴

According to Sardar K M Panikkar, two prominent leaders of India they were put forward a self-protection movement and it was the first encounter with western culture. In this context, Dayananda Saraswati and Swami Vivekananda were Vedantists, and their efforts for self-protection delivered a religious nationalistic view to the Indian public. Two aspects are important in this movement one is political and the other is religious. So basically this type of movement conveyed religious Nationalism. That means Nationalism through the basics of ancient culture. There was a concealed life in India that felt this like a challenge, and, in the effort of two extraordinary men, it became an answer and corrective energy. The religious revival, brought about by Dayananda Saraswati and Swami Vivekananda, was India's first modern effort for self-protection, her first reply to the challenge of Western culture. From that time onwards indivisible Nationalism had two aspects, one political, and the other religious. They felt and their feeling did not mislead them that political salvation could come to their land only from a revival of that in it which was most nearly national religion.⁵

This type of religious-nationalist movement was promulgated by these Vedantists against the denationalizing tendencies of missionary schools and government schools. The leaders of that movement had an insightful national sentiment. It propagated the national emotion and its philosophy is that life is the best and ultimate life. The first movement of religious revival under the Empire called itself the Brahma Samaj. That movement was purely religious, it had neither a political message nor a political aim. Therefore, its contribution to Indian Nationalism was and could be, only an indirect contribution. Nevertheless, the National Movement owes it a large debt, for it gave to that movement eminent. Leaders. The founders of the Brahma Samaj, however, were men of the Western culture, and on the whole, the movement was an Anglicizing one. Perhaps this was unintended, but it made the movement unpopular.

The Brahma Samaj continued to be a potent religious force in relatively small circles, mostly in Bengal, but as a factor in Indian Nationalism, it soon became secondary to a movement plainly and distinctively National the movement of which Sri Ramakrishna was the prophet and Swami Vivekananda the best expounder. Those men were Vedantists. Their religious orthodoxy was informed perhaps one may add "sustained" by a profound National sentiment. As it glowed on the eloquent lips of Swami Vivekananda, Vedantism was more than a philosophy, it was a life the best and greatest life. Be that presentation true or false, one thing is quite certain, the new Vedantism powerfully counteracted the de-nationalizing tendencies of the Missionary and Government schools. Yet no more than the Brahma Samaj had it a political ideal. It was a political force, not through a political message, it had no such message, but through its vivid religious nationalism.⁶

All these religious nationalist movements Arya Samaj was more powerful and other religious nationalist movements inspired the general public. A political ideal first became evident in Hinduism when the Arya Samaj became a power in the land. That movement was also a reforming movement, a movement for reform in religion. Its founder was a Gujarati Brahmin another Buddha who rebelled against the hide-bound Hinduism which surrounded him. It seemed to him that the caste system, founded as it was upon racial and vocational differences, was the very radix Malorum, the root of the evils that afflicted modern India. This conviction defined for him his life work. He saw in caste the chief buttress of vast obscurantism which impoverished life and inhibited growth. Like Nanak the

Sikh, he gave himself up to a lifelong effort against it. However, he did not do what the leaders of the Brahma Samaj had done he did not break with the religious tradition of his people. Somewhat did he go back to its first sources and original forms of existent doctrines in India.

He appealed to the distant past, from the debased and deadening things around him to the simpler, and purer, religion of the Vedas. The Society that he founded Arya Samaj became the most important religious organization in Punjab. In it, orthodoxy became a missionary, some would say aggressive. The Arya Samaj set itself to counteract the education given in the Government and Christian schools: to every part of India, it sent forth evangelists who preached a new gospel the gospel of Arya civilization. They preached that gospel with fervor, as the hope of India. To the dominant national sentiment of their people they set forth a new social ideal, one radically and thoroughly Indian.⁷

In Northern India, the Arya Samaj became identified with National Patriotism. Passionate love for the Indian Motherland, tireless and unselfish devotion to the National cause in every field of work, in education, social service, politics, in industrial regeneration, were "the fruits of the spirit" in the Arya Samaj. In it, religion and politics were aspects of one indivisible faith, of one indivisible energy. This revival of the Hindu religion was essentially conservative; it called men back into the ancient ways. True, it made those ways paths of progress, but the progress it envisaged was growth from an ancient root, the development of an old tradition. Not by an appropriation of novelties, but by fidelity to a Past perduring in a great inheritance, thus was India to be saved. That was the gospel of the Arya civilization.

In India, English education has tended to de-nationalize. Some of the first efforts of India's renascent life were efforts of self-protection against it. Nevertheless, it is one of the origins of Indian Nationalism, and directly or indirectly it has played a noteworthy part in the development and diffusion of Nationalism. English education opened up to "Young India" that marvelous autobiography of Freedom in the history of England. Nothing in the early days of Indian Nationalism is more remarkable than its dependence upon English sources. Its arguments were inferences from what is believed to be England's faith, its illustrations were emblazoned with figures in the Whig roll of honor. Certain it is, however, that "Young India" has passed through a disillusioning experience. It has been discovered perhaps we are minimizing, that the English tradition of Freedom is more complex than it seemed to be in the Whig version of it.⁸

The men who gave India English education knew what they were doing. They knew that they were preparing, for some future day, changes or discontent. They were brave enough, and great enough, to go on with their work. That work of theirs became, both directly and indirectly, a primary cause of Indian Nationalism. It gave to India the Whig vision of England: its de-nationalizing tendencies motivated the religious reaction. The political development which is normal for the State may be described as a process of moralization. It establishes between the Government and the people vital and institutional relations of such a kind that the Government gradually ceases to be a mere power imposed upon the people and gradually becomes a normative organ of the people's life. It can hardly be said that any development of this kind has taken place in the Government of India. A people that has grown into a national consciousness has a right to political self-determination that is the primary postulate of Indian Nationalism. Today, few would deny this postulate, so few, that to prove it would be a work of supererogation.⁹

Mr. G. K. Gokhale told the Royal Commission on Public Expenditure that the nature and constitution of India's Government had been a cause of an infinitely great moral evil: "A kind of dwarfing or stunting of the Indian race is going on under the present system. Must live all the days of our lives in an atmosphere of inferiority, and the tallest of us must bend so that the exigencies of the system may be satisfied." This conviction that British rule has caused a moral deterioration in the national character is met with at every turn in Indian thought and has been one of the chief factors in the growth of an aggressive Indian Nationalism.

The nature and aims of the National Movement in India are most clearly apparent in the chief and most conspicuous organ of the Movement the National Congress. The Indian National Congress was founded in Bombay in the year 1885. Its origins were British, not Indian. It became an organ of militant Nationalism, but this function was unintended, unforeseen, and deplored. The men who first thought of holding an Indian National Congress were certain patriotic Englishmen who were reasonably disturbed by what they saw around them, by the increasing "unrest" of the "masses" of India, by the increasing alienation of educated Indians from the Government of India. Moved by their reflections, Lord Dufferin then Viceroy suggested to a retired Anglo-Indian official the convening of a Congress. He hoped it would be a safety valve for the British Raj.¹⁰

When Indian Nationalists look back upon that first National Congress, they discern in it scarcely anything that would today be called Nationalist. True, it advanced political claims on behalf of the Indian people, but the partially - free India it envisaged was not Indian. The leaders of the Congress were men of the Western culture, they were dominated by Western ideals. That the West was superior to the East superior in kind was accepted without question, and some of the most potent minds were convinced that, only when India had Europeanized herself, would she be able to take the place which their patriotism denned for her in the community of nations. The chief topic at the Congress was not political enfranchisement, but "Social Reform." The reforms intended were Western, and the plans most discussed were plans for a Western readjustment of India's life, of the time Mahadev Govinda Ranade was prominent in this work. Mistrust of all things Indian was general and salient. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the sessions of the first Indian National Congress marked one of the most momentous crises in the history of Indian civilisation.¹¹

The founding of New India in 1901 may be taken as the first public act of these New Nationalists. Their marked intellectual power, their wholehearted devotion to the Indian Motherland, soon made them the most potent party from the point of view of the Government, the most formidable party in Indian public life. The leader of this new party, the "father" of this New Nationalism, was none other than Bal Gangadhar Tilak. His orthodoxy was unimpeachable, his patriotism beyond question, before long, he was both idolized and execrated. His personality is a symbol of his Movement, his public career is the epitome of it.⁴⁹ Tilak was not left to work single-handed. In the North, Laj pat Rai unsullied by political ambition, above all party -wrangles gave to the New Nationalism the weight of his noble personality. His support was the more valuable because he was one of the trusted leaders of the Arya Samaj the orthodox and far-extended society which has done so great a work for India. In Calcutta, another orthodox Hindu Bepin Chandra Pal gave Tilak the powerful support of that militant paper New India. Lai pat Rai, Bepin Chandra Pal, these Indians were eminent, and they did much, very much, to further the New Nationalism.¹²

Of all the Indian leaders' Tilak was the first to recognize that Hindu Nationalism would never become a considerable force until it had ceased to be purely secular, Hindu Nationalism must be supported by Hindu Orthodoxy. His profound Sanskrit learning, and his strict conservatism in religion, gave him much influence on the Hindu population on the west coast. In the hope of making that influence a political force for the regeneration of India, he founded the Anti-CowKilling Society, and this at once became a focus and organ of extreme religious conservatism. In another institution, which bore the famous name of Shivaji, Tilak essayed a piece of work more distinctively political. Its establishment of it was an effort to revive the national spirit of the Marathas. Shivaji is still a name to conjure with among the martial races of the Deccan, and, with sure political insight, Tilak sought to make the cherished tradition of their splendid past the basis and inspiration of a militant Maratha Nationalism. Shivaji is the national hero of the Marathas. He put an end to Moghul rule on the west coast and established in it a place a Maratha imperium which lasted until 1818.¹³

"The partition was undone." True, but the partition of Bengal gave to the extreme Nationalists "the new Party" as they began to style themselves the tactical opportunity that their chiefs had long desired and long sought. Tilak and his colleagues had seen quite clearly that the New Nationalism would not become what they wished it to become unless they could utilize the

organization that their precursors had built up, and could convert to their uses the magic of that immense personal popularity that those men had acquired by five-and-twenty years of untiring work. The younger generation needed of Bengal had been more than a rearrangement in the administrative machine, it had been a political force working passionately in millions of hearts, and what it did there was not undone. The partition of Bengal gave to the extreme Nationalists "the new Party" as they began to style themselves the tactical opportunity that their chiefs had long desired and long sought. Tilak and his colleagues had seen quite clearly that the New Nationalism would not become what they wished it to become unless they could utilize the organization that their precursors had built up, and could convert to their uses the magic of that immense personal popularity that those men had acquired by five-and-twenty years of untiring work. The younger generation needed to invest its work with the authority of the elder.¹⁴

In the sessions of 1905, however, these were held at Benares, it soon became evident, and everyone felt, that the Congress had been transformed. Deafening shouts of "VandeMataram!" proclaimed to the world that Indian patriotism had ceased to be coquetry and had become love. No Indian would discount the patriotism of the early Congressmen. It was, however, an intellectual attitude rather than a passionate conviction. It was not "a sovereign dogma" "inflaming the mind, inspiring the heart, informing the imagination. The cry "VandeMataram!" testified to a profound change, one of those momentous changes that create new epochs." "Vande Mataram" became the war-cry of the Nationalists. It means "I worship the Mother" "or" Hail, Mother. "political amelioration of India. "India a nation" In the Maratha country no one was more popular than this modern Shivaji, no one so venerated, no one so loved. Though his work for the Indian Motherland had been uninterrupted, save for a period of imprisonment, during which he wrote a masterly treatise on the antiquity of the Vedas, he had hitherto kept in the background at the annual sessions of the Congress.¹⁵

The Karma Yugin ceased to exist, the Vande Mataram was suppressed, and the Punjabi and the Hindu changed hands. All the vernacular papers of the Party were either gagged or rooted out one by one; the leaders of the Party were imprisoned, deported, or exiled. Tilak himself was arrested, and sent to imprisonment at Mandalay, in Burma. Aurobindo Goshe, the leader of the New Party in Bengal, was charged with conspiracy, and, though acquitted, so completely that not a slur remained upon him, life was made so impossible for him that he left the shelter of the Union Jack, and took refuge with the French in Pondicherry. The New Party was broken, dispersed, and silenced. In India its voice was no longer heard: only from intangible seclusion in Paris or San Francisco were a few fiery souls became fierier because they thought themselves safe came intermittent outbursts, frantic and extravagant, which did the cause of India no good. "Broken, dispersed, silenced" "the passing bell was tolling, and no Resurgam was evident. Their Nationalism was an integral Nationalism. It set forth the National Right in its completeness, and as an immediate Right. "Swaraj at once," that was their policy.¹⁶

The Nationalists, on the other hand, preferred compulsion by vital forces. They would have nothing to do with what seemed to them the dull futility of "constitutional agitation." They were fighters, not petitioners their weapons were Swadeshi and the Boycott. Boycott the Government, Boycott the Courts, Boycott British goods, organize general passive obedience which would make administration impossible that was the method by which they hoped to obtain Swaraj. This doctrine was elaborated by Bepin Chandra Pal in those Madras speeches which are still the most authoritative exposition of the new creed and the new method. He summed up the new program thus: Organize all the resources of the nation, synthesize all its forces. Making the general need for Freedom the motive of a general integration, at once material and spiritual, catches a glimpse of something much larger. The Nationalists had not only a fighting policy, but they had also a constructive program. This program included four chief things: (1) the promotion of education. (2) The raising of national volunteers. (3) The development of Indian industries. (4) The establishment of a political

organization intended to assume unto itself as much as possible of the work that had been left to the Government.¹⁷

Aurobindo Ghose a young Cambridge graduate who was the philosopher of Integral Nationalism set this forth quite plainly in an article which was published in *Bande Mataram* on the 22nd of January 1908: "We must devise means of stimulating the activities of our people. This cannot be better done than by organizing a representative assembly, which, in its annual or periodical course of sitting, will decide our course of action. It does not necessarily follow that it will come into collision with the powers that be let us thus relieve the bureaucratic administration of as much of its duties, in as many departments as possible."¹⁸

Patriotism is a love of country, of one's visible country. Not, however, in its apparent its obvious reality, is one's visible country the source of Patriotism, and though ever the term of Patriotism, not for its own sake is it the term. It is term and source because and as the mediation of an unseen Motherhood not less local.¹²⁰ Some years ago, in my first book,¹ I answered that question as well as I could, and when I revise my answer today in the light of the failures and achievements of this immensely tragic time it still seems to be substantially sound. I cannot give another answer, but this war-time which has confirmed my thoughts through much disappointment has provided my answer in other words.¹⁹ (Patriotism: An Essay towards a Constructive Theory of Politics. By Hakluyt Egerton.)

Patriotism is not an innate virtue, nor is it unconditioned. Before it can exist, something must happen. Patriotism is the love of country. Love of country there cannot be, unless, inexperience, one's country has become lovable. Love is the soul's response to a gift of Life. Man's natural responsiveness to vital values becomes Patriotism When a Nation's common life is recognized as a bearer of values.¹²⁰ It has much to do with nationality because Patriotism is the chief normal correlate of national consciousness not always, but whenever a nation's common life is a felt value.²⁰

A Nation is a Society particularized by a distinctive common consciousness that in its political aspect envisages political self-determination. Political self-determination makes a nation master its own house. Therefore, political self-determination implies political sovereignty. Nevertheless, political sovereignty is not the thing that constitutes a nation. A nation's political self-determination is a function of its constitutive common life. A nation is a nation in virtue of a distinctive common life of a certain kind No one has ever said that race is nationality, and no one with any intrinsic claim to consideration has ever said that racial unity is indispensable to a nation. Nationality is " a content of consciousness," not a fact of ethnology. ² The higher kind of political understanding is the rarest thing in the world. It is even rarer than energetic friendship. Nationality is " a content of consciousness," not a fact of ethnology. ² The higher kind of political understanding is the rarest thing in the world. It is even rarer than an energetic friendship. Because nationality and the process of real nationalization are wholly spiritual, men of different races can stand together, on an equal footing, within the unity of one nationality. Nationality subsists in a common consciousness created by comradeship and cooperation.²¹

Men often speak with deserved disrespect of things that are proffered in the name of Education, but no one who has known the reality of Education can slight it. By it, the great achievements of art and thought and the yet greater achievements of patriotism and faith are made a present possession; by it, man's environment is transfigured and his outlook indefinitely extended; without it, patriotism is well-nigh blind, and faith scarcely articulate. Nor are the results of Education merely intellectual. The harvest of it is always earned, and it is earned by an effort which is a discipline, a discipline not only of mind but also of character.²²

The people of the east were thrilled by the new gospel of democracy, they demanded that the principles of national self-determination and self-government should be applied to the dependencies and colonies of the allied nations. The First World War gave a stimulus to the national movement in Asia, especially in India. Democracy means to ascertain how it can function efficiently and subserve

the interests of the mass of the people and how it should satisfy the more enduring values of life.²³ (G L Metha, The democratic Idea, Sardar K M Panikkar's Shashiyabdapoorthy Souvenir 1954, p 28)

Finally, I conclude that Sardar K M Panikkar uses the term nationality from different perspectives and is a subjective expression. The efforts of nationalism in India assume not only the uniformity of determinations but a coordinated action is indispensable for accomplishing independence. The resultant political dominion gave birth to resistance which produced a new perception, that is, Nationalism. He opines about Indian Nationalism was explained in terms of the cultural and religious strength of the nation. Despite his great appreciation, the Hindu revivalist had long disapproved of the idea of the new society in India being planned based on religious equality and freedom for all irrespective of caste and creed. Contrary to revivalist historical and national thinking Panikkar did neither believe in the golden age nor the golden tradition. He urged that it was necessary to "eradicate from our mind every vestige of the view, cherished by many, of a golden age in our history is a record of uniform progress. According to him the attempt to see in the past a golden age was 'inflation of the ideal of Nationalism. ²⁴His attached was "the malignant continuance of unreason, prejudice and blind adherence to past notions based on a perverted idea of an imaginary past.²⁵ The broadminded and generous understandings indoctrinated the customary of Indian Nationalism in the attentions of numerous Indians who would otherwise have to keep on indefinitely regional in their outlook.

ENDNOTES

1. Barun De, 'Sardar K M Panikkar' Bengal past and present, January – June 1964
2. Iswara Dutt, 'Sardar K M Panikkar', Shashiyabdapoorthy souvenir, 1954 p.175.
3. Panikkar papers, file no 12.
- 4 Ibid, file no 12.
5. Op.cit, file no 12.
6. Panikkar papers, file no IV- 15.
7. ibid, file no IV- 15.
8. Tarashankar Banerjee, Sardar KM Panikkar, A Profile of a Historian, Ratna Prakashan Calcutta, 1977, P-11
9. Barun De, 'Sardar K M Panikkar' in Bengal past and present, January – June 1964 op. cit.
10. K. M. Panikkar, Indian Nationalism its origin, history, and ideals, the faith press 22 Buckingham Street, Charing Cross, W.C 1920 p- viii
11. ibid, pix
12. Op cite p- xi-xii
13. K. M. Panikkar, Indian Nationalism its origin, history, and ideals, the faith press 22 Buckingham Street, Charing Cross, W.C 1920 p- Viii-xiv
14. ibid, p- 1-2
15. Op cit p- 2-3
16. ibid p- 4-5
17. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A The Fundamental Unity of India (from Hindu sources), pp. 20-22
18. K. M. Panikkar, Indian Nationalism its origin, history, and ideals, the faith press 22 Buckingham Street, Charing Cross, W.C 1920 p- 7
19. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A The Fundamental Unity of India (from Hindu sources), pp. 20-22
20. K. M. Panikkar, Indian Nationalism its origin, history, and ideals, the faith press 22 Buckingham Street, Charing Cross, W.C 1920 p- 8
21. ibid, p- 9- 12
22. ibid, p- 14
23. ibid, P- 17
24. Panikker's papers file no 4.
25. Visva-Bharathi Convocation address.1995: Appendix-5

REFERENCE

1. B G Gokhale Indian thought through the ages: a study of some dominant concepts
2. Barun De, 'Sardar K M Panikkar' in Bengal past and present
3. K. M. Panikkar, Essays on Educational Reconstruction in India, 1920
4. K. M. Panikkar, A Survey Of Indian History, 1954
5. K. M. Panikkar, Federal India .1930
6. K. M. Panikkar, Indian Nationalism its origin, history, and ideals
7. K. M. Panikkar, The basis of an Indo- British Treaty,1946
8. Panikkar papers, file no 1.
9. Panikkar papers, file no IV.
10. Panikkar papers, file no VII.
11. Panikkar papers, file no XII.
12. Radhakumud Mookerji, M.A The Fundamental Unity of India
13. Tarashankar Banerjee, Sardar K M Panikkar, a Profile of a Historian